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Item 6 of the provisional agenda

REPORT ON OTHER MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Note by the Secretary-General

Contribution from the Washington NGO Coalition

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 46/116, requested the Secretary-General to report to the Preparatory Committee on progress made on meetings that had been organized under the auspices of the United Nations programme pursuant to General Assembly 45/155.

2. The attention of the Preparatory Committee is drawn to the attached contribution of the Washington NGO Coalition entitled "Recommendations for reform in the United Nations human rights system."

3. The Washington NGO Coalition states in the Introduction to its report that the challenge to the United Nations, its Member States and the human rights community is to ensure that the World Conference somehow touches, in real and tangible ways, the lives of the millions of men, women and children throughout the world who so desperately need protection but are not receiving it.

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4. The recommendations of the various working groups of the Coalition deal with the following issues: human rights integration and restructuring of the United Nations; human rights education; women's human rights; economic, social and cultural rights; refugee policy; peacekeeping and humanitarian initiatives; international law and judicial reform. The document also includes additional recommendations on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights; the Centre for Human Rights; technology, communications and administrative reform; treaties and treaty-monitoring bodies; theme Mechanisms; the human rights of gay men and lesbians; torture; indigenous peoples' rights, the reform in United Nations representation and participation; development and human rights; human rights and the Global AIDS pandemic; minority rights; and protection for human rights defenders.

Washington
NGO Coalition
UN World Conference on Human Rights
Satellite Meeting
February 23, 1993

United Nations World Conference on Human Rights

Vienna, Austria
June 14 to 25, 1993

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFORM

in the

United Nations Human Rights System

Prepared By:

The Washington NGO Coalition

Table of Contents

Introduction

The World Conference on Human Rights
The Washington NGO Coalition

I. World Conference Priorities

II. Working Group Recommendations

A. *Human Rights Integration and U.N. Restructuring*
B. *Human Rights Education*
C. *Women's Human Rights*
D. *Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*
E. *Refugee Policy*
F. *Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Initiatives*
G. *International Law and Judicial Reform*

III. Additional Recommendations

A. *The U.N. Commission on Human Rights*
B. *The U.N. Centre for Human Rights*
C. *Technology, Communications and Administrative Reform*
D. *Treaties and Treaty Monitoring Bodies*
E. *Theme Mechanisms*
F. *The Human Rights of Gay Men and Lesbians*
G. *Torture*
H. *Indigenous Peoples' Rights*
I. *Reform in United Nations Representation and Participation*
J. *Development and Human Rights*
K. *Human Rights and the Global AIDS Pandemic*
L. *Minority Rights*
M. *Protection for Human Rights Defenders*

Appendix 1 *Agenda from the February 23 Satellite Meeting*

Appendix 2 *List of Coalition Participants*

Appendix 3 *Recommendations and Concerns from Contributing Organizations*

Appendix 4 *Full-length Position Papers from Contributing Organizations*

Introduction

The World Conference

The United Nations World Conference on Human Rights, the first high-level, global U.N. summit on human rights in twenty-five years, will take place this summer in Vienna, Austria from June 14 to 25, 1993. In itself, the World Conference will be an historic event at least, but should also be a meaningful event, setting a progressive agenda for human rights promotion and protection into the next millennium. The Conference takes place in the midst of what many believe to be the worst period in our history for world peace and individual well-being. Only a few hours drive from the Conference Center in Vienna, the systematic abuse of human rights is taking place on a large scale. The challenge to the United Nations, its member states, and the Human Rights community is to ensure that The World Conference somehow touch, in real and tangible ways, the lives of the millions of men, women, and children throughout the world who so desperately need protection but are not receiving it.

The U.N. General Assembly outlined the Conference's goals as follows:

1. Review and assess progress made in the field of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and to identify obstacles to progress and ways to overcome these.

2. Examine the relationship between development and the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights.

3. Examine ways to improve the implementation of existing standards and instruments.

4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the methods and mechanisms used by the UN in the field of human rights.

5. Formulate concrete recommendations for improving the effectiveness of UN activities and mechanisms in the field of human rights through programs aimed at promoting, encouraging, and monitoring respect for human rights.

6. Explore and secure sources of funding for the support of current and future human rights efforts of the UN.

In addition, The General Assembly gave authority and responsibility for planning the Conference to an international Preparatory Committee, but after three meetings and months of lengthy negotiations the Committee was unable to agree on an agenda for the World Conference. Regional differences in values and priorities surfaced and in effect stalled the preparatory process. As a result, the General Assembly itself took up the task of finalizing an agenda in its last session. At stake are questions of sovereignty, impunity, universality, and governmental responsibility. Camps appear divided between those pushing for more international accountability and those hoping to protect themselves from "outside" scrutiny.

But even those governments who are publicly pressing for more accountability appear compromised in the face of international political and economic ties and interests, not to mention by the human rights problems and complexities in their own countries.

Despite the stated goal of the Conference, in short to look at problems and failures in human rights protection of the past and to take concrete action to avoid problems and failures in the future, in this climate of international retrenchment and political face-saving, the World Conference on Human Rights is at risk of becoming little more than a public relations platform for governments who wish to be seen saying one thing but then who do another, or worse of becoming an opportunity for a few energetic governments to actually turn back the clock in international human rights protection.

The Washington NGO Coalition

The Washington NGO Coalition was formed in the shared conviction that the World Conference *does* have the potential to mark a significant step forward in the international promotion and protection of human rights. The World Conference *can* provide the impetus for real structural change within the U.N., moving the U.N. to make itself and its bodies and programs much more effective in protecting and enforcing human rights standards around the world.

The fundamental objective of the Coalition is to bring to bear on the World Conference, and on the United Nations generally, the concerns, expertise and energy of the nongovernmental community in the area of human rights. First shared, discussed and debated at a recognized satellite meeting of the World Conference, and now presented in this document are specific recommendations for reform in the United Nations system set up to promote and protect the human rights of all the world's peoples.

The Coalition offers the results of its work to the Secretariat of the World Conference, to the Governments of the World, to the NGO community, and to the general public as both a symbol of its belief in the life-saving and life-affirming possibilities of this World Conference, and as a concrete contribution to the work that will be done there and to the work that will need to continue long afterwards.

Accordingly, the Washington NGO Coalition calls on all participants in the World Conference to recognize the importance and necessity of these recommendations, to consider them seriously, and finally upon the U.N. to implement them. This document focuses on the work for which the United Nations was created. The U.N. and its member states must take this opportunity to place the protection of human rights in its proper and necessary place at the foundation of the U.N. system, and to do what must be done to bring human rights protection into the day-to-day lives of those in this world who are as yet, still made to suffer.

I. World Conference Priorities

As representatives from the governments of the world, the United Nations, and the nongovernmental community come together in Vienna for this World Conference on Human Rights, to lay a foundation for international human rights work and protection for the next generation, they must pay close attention and consideration to the following ten objectives, recognizing their essential and overarching importance.

This Coalition and its Satellite Meeting call on the World Conference on Human Rights, in its preparations, proceedings, and final declaration to:

1. ***Reaffirm*** the universal nature and application of Human Rights. This World Conference must not allow itself to become an opportunity for any nation or body to weaken the universal definition of Human Rights.

2. ***Recognize*** the indivisibility and equality of all human rights; economic, social, cultural, political, and civil.

3. ***Integrate*** the protection and promotion of human rights into every aspect of the United Nations' work and activity.

4. ***Encourage*** the increased coordination, integration, and effectiveness of *existing* U.N. human rights bodies, standards and mechanisms, and their universal implementation and enforcement, free from political bias and manipulation.

5. ***Integrate*** fully, in definition and practice, the protection of women's rights into the general protection of human rights.

6. ***Extend*** the access to and the application of international law to individuals as well as nations.

7. ***Accept, encourage and facilitate*** strong participation of nongovernmental organizations in the U.N. human rights system and in the World Conference.

8. ***Strengthen***, politically and otherwise, the United Nations and other international institutions that monitor and enforce human rights.

9. ***Allocate*** significantly more resources (financial, technological, human, etc.) to the U.N. human rights system.

10. ***Recognize and reaffirm*** human rights education, the right to teach and to know one's rights, as a Human Right.

II. Working Group Recommendations

A. Working Group on Human Rights Integration and U.N. Restructuring

The United Nations was born in the aftermath of a human rights disaster. Article 1 of the U.N. Charter places human rights issues at the very foundation of all the U.N. does and stands for. And yet of all the problems facing the United Nations' system responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights around the world, among the greatest is the system's own weakness and fragmentation. The Commission, the Centre, the theme mechanisms, and the treaty monitoring bodies all suffer from a serious lack of resources, coordination, and authority within the U.N. Not only should these bodies be working closely with one another, but they should also be working closely with most other U.N. programs and departments. What U.N activity does not impact or touch on human rights? This Satellite meeting calls on the United Nations to make human rights promotion and protection its first priority, and to give to its own human rights bodies the resources, political authority, and coordinating capacity they need to carry out what is no less than the United Nations' raison d'etre.

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

1.1 Call for the creation of a U.N. Special Commissioner for Human Rights.

The mandate and responsibilities of the Special Commissioner should include the following:

1.2 The authority as well as the resources to respond effectively to human rights crises around the world.

1.3 The ability to help UN agencies identify the human rights component of their programs and to help them develop operational goals in this area.

1.4 The authority and resources to see that all the various aspects of human rights work within the UN are well coordinated.

In addition, the Special Commissioner should:

1.5 Give special attention to long neglected areas such as women's rights. Particular attention should be paid to integrating the protection and promotion of women's human rights into the work of all UN agencies.

1.6 Reflect independence and impartiality both before governments of the world and within the UN system. It is particularly important that the Special Commissioner not be too closely identified with the Security Council.

1.7 Be accountable to the General Assembly.

In addition to calling for a U.N. Special Commissioner, the World Conference should:

2. Recognize particularly the need to integrate human rights protection and mechanisms more effectively with Peacekeeping and Humanitarian activities.

3. Affirm the Atlanta Declaration recommendation that clear criteria be developed for security council involvement in human rights issues which should stress impartiality, legitimacy, transparency, and accountability for initiatives and decisions in this area.

4.1 Ensure that the Secretary General exercise clear leadership in making a reality of his statement that all programs of the UN increasingly reflect human rights.

4.2 Support The Secretary General as he will need to use a variety of mechanisms in order to mediate between the emerging consensus on the need for more UN involvement in human rights work and competing demands for resources.

5. Recognize the need to invest in long-term strategies to address the root causes of violence and affirm the concept of UN involvement in post-conflict peace building outlined by the Secretary General.

B. Working Group on Human Rights Education

Article 1 of the United Nations Charter names as a purpose of the United Nations the "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights". In adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the General Assembly referred explicitly to education when it proclaimed the Declaration to be "a standard of achievement for all people and all nations, and to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect of these rights and freedoms." It is in this light that the Coalition Working Group on Human Rights Education offers the following recommendations.

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

6. Declare that human rights education is itself a human right, as has been recognized in several UN Documents, and issue a call for mass education in human rights, now.

7. Facilitate and encourage international, regional and national NGOs, and in particular those concerned with women, labor, development, the environment, persons with HIV/AIDS, indigenous peoples, gay men and lesbians, and other social justice activists, human rights advocates, educators, religious organizations and the media to increase their involvement in formal, informal and nonformal education in human rights.

8. Facilitate and encourage NGOs to add a human rights dimension to their activities and to join in developing programs for mass education in human rights and democracy.

9. Urge Member States, educators and NGOs to support a People's Decade of Human Rights Education, already in progress in some countries.

10. Establish an international Fund to support the human rights education activities of NGOs.

11. Require treaty monitoring bodies to ask States parties to include in their information and reports the extent and scope of formal and nonformal human rights education in the reporting State.

12. Add Human Rights Education as a regular agenda item to the annual meetings of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

13. Require the Commission on Human Rights to appoint a special rapporteur on human rights education. Any special rapporteur reporting on human rights conditions under the Covenants and Conventions, should specify the extent and scope of formal and nonformal human rights education in the reporting State.

14. Call on all member states, in coordination with the NGO community, to develop in their countries Resource Centers for Human Rights Education.

C. Working Group on Women's Human Rights

As noted by many women's rights and human rights organizations and affirmed at the regional preparatory committees and the interregional meeting sponsored by the Council of Europe, Women's human rights have been historically overlooked and marginalized by the UN bodies charged with the protection and promotion of human rights.

The satellite meeting reiterates this assessment and strongly endorses the call for reform of existing human rights mechanisms and new initiatives to ensure effective promotion and protection of women's human rights worldwide.

Accordingly, the UN World Conference and its Secretariat should:

15. Assure that Women's human rights are thoroughly integrated into the work of the World Conference on Human Rights, incorporated explicitly into the annotated agenda of the World Conference and addressed in the background documents prepared for the conference.

16. Call upon all UN agencies and Commissions to integrate the central concerns of women into existing priorities for research, advisory services, public education, monitoring of violations, and implementation and enforcement of international human rights norms.

17. Ensure that as the World Conference takes up international human rights issues, such as the universality of human rights, the integration of human rights into all other UN activities and the indivisibility of all human rights, women's human rights issues are addressed. For example, discussion of the universality of human rights should, as affirmed at the regional meeting for Africa, emphasize

the need for governments to counter all forms of religious or cultural intolerance denying women's human rights.

18.1 Guarantee broad NGO participation, including that of women's rights organizations, in order to ensure credible treatment of human rights issues by the conference, and where possible, provide resources to facilitate NGO participation in the Conference.

18.2 Create formal procedures for communicating between NGO meetings and the official World Conference.

18.3 Ensure the equitable participation of women and men in official government delegations.

In addition to these general recommendations, the satellite meeting makes the following specific recommendations with regard to improving the promotion and protection of women's human rights, with the understanding that any recommendation in this document that refers to human rights encompasses women's human rights.

In order to enhance implementation of human rights standards with regard to women's human rights, the UN World Conference should:

19. Examine the severity of the denial of human rights to women and girl children, to identify the obstacles to further progress and ways in which these obstacles can be overcome, paying special attention to gender bias in customs, traditions, language, and domestic and international law.

20.1 Recognize women's right to reproductive health and to control their fertility, as these rights are integral to women's equality, liberty, physical and mental integrity and human dignity.

20.2 Note the effect of discrimination against women with respect to their ability to protect their health, paying particular attention to the implications of HIV/AIDS.

21. Adopt measures to ensure that the treaty committees, thematic and country Rapporteurs and Working Groups, independent experts and other bodies entrusted with protecting human rights address violations of women's human rights, including gender-specific abuses, in the areas that fall within their mandates (through advisory services and training programs, and monitoring, reporting and complaints procedures). These include:

(a) Training for UN human rights and humanitarian relief personnel and for independent experts to ensure that they will address human rights abuses specific to women and carry out their work without gender-bias.

(b) Ordering periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of the UN monitoring, reporting and complaints procedures, as well as its advisory services and training programs in addressing, and devising more effective responses to, violations of women's human rights.

(c) Establishing goals and timetables for securing equal representations of women on all U.N. treaty committees and among the Special Rapporteurs and

Working Groups established by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and in the program on advisory services in human rights.

22. Call on the UN Commission on Human Rights to appoint a Special Rapporteur on systematic gender-discrimination and violence against women. The Rapporteur should be authorized to receive and report on information from governments, non-governmental organizations, inter-governmental institutions and individuals; to respond effectively to allegations of violations against women; and to recommend measures to prevent continuing violations.

23. Provide for strengthening the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by:

(a) Calling on State parties to withdraw those reservations to the Convention that are obstacles to its effective implementation, and to object to reservations by other State parties that are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, and endorsing the suggestion of the meeting of Chairpersons that the Sub-Commission prepare an analysis of questions of incompatibility arising from the reservations to the principal human rights treaties.

(b) Calling for a working group in the Commission on the Status of Women to outline procedures for drafting an optional protocol establishing an individual complaints procedure under the Convention, and endorsing the elaboration of such an optional protocol.

(c) Ensuring the provision of adequate resources (including human resources) for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

In considering challenges to the full realization of human rights, the World Conference should:

24. Recommend more effective U.N. implementation procedures to eliminate the violence against women that is endemic to all societies. Various forms of violence against women breach guarantees established in the Universal Declaration, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and other human rights instruments, including:

(a) The right not to be arbitrarily deprived of life, liberty and security of the person.

(b) The right not to be subject to torture or inhuman and degrading treatment.

(c) The right to just and favorable conditions of work.

(d) The right to equal protection of the law.

(e) The prohibition of gender discrimination.

25.1 Consider in discussions of U.N. peacekeeping activities, emergency response mechanisms, and humanitarian assistance (such as aid to victims of the conflicts in Somalia and in the former Yugoslavia) the contemporary trends in and challenges to the full realization of all human rights of men and women.

25.2 Develop effective responses to gender-specific abuses and to the particular vulnerabilities of women as a group in crisis situations such as armed conflict or ethnic conflict at the international, national or local level.

25.3 Consider the impact on women of all measures taken.

26. Formulate concrete recommendations for improving the effectiveness of United nations activities and mechanisms in initiating fundamental changes in attitudes, customs, traditions and laws that foster gender bias.

D. Working Group on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Although the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights, and on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights are often spoken of as the "pillars" of international human rights protection, one has historically been thought of as more important, prior to, or simply more "real" than the other. They have, in practice and protection, remained separate and unequal. The indivisibility of these rights must be acknowledged, and the status offered in the past solely to Civil and Political Rights must be now be accorded to Civil, Political, Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights as a whole. Economic, social, and cultural rights are Human Rights.

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

27. Reaffirm the universality, indivisibility, and interdependence of economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights by concrete actions and not just through rhetorical statements. Economic, social and cultural rights should be accorded the attention, status, and financial staff resources consistent with these commitments.

28.1 Reaffirm that adhering to the reporting requirements outlined in the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is intrinsic to fulfilling the responsibilities of State parties.

28.2 Call on each state party to institute a statistical information system through which it can monitor its own performance focusing on the status of such groups as girls and women; ethnic, racial, religious, sexual and linguistic minorities; individuals affected by the AIDS pandemic; the poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups under each article. This will enable each state to fulfill reporting obligations in a manner consistent with the Revised General Reporting Guidelines for State parties adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its fifth session.

29. Request State Parties to the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to develop plans with explicit goals for the progressive realization of each right.

30. Call on the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to consider the appointment of Special Rapporteurs on issues such as:

(a) Conceptualizing specific economic, social and cultural rights focusing on the core obligations under each right.

(b) Human rights and income distribution.

(c) The humans rights responsibilities and international legal duties of international financial institutions.

31. Encourage the U.N. Centre for Human Rights to make expert assistance available to states for purposes of formulating policies to achieve progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights and developing mechanisms of evaluation through its Advisory Services Program.

32. Support the development of an optional protocol to the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to permit the examination contained in the convention.

33. Recognize explicitly the right to development as established in the Declaration on the Right to Development, adopted by the General Assembly in its Resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986.

34. Call on governments to promote the economic, social and cultural rights of social groups such as women, minorities, and indigenous people in the context of sustainable development as delineated in Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration.

E. Working Group on Refugee Policy

The World Conference should support and endorse the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and seek to enhance the UNHCR's protection role. All human rights recommendations from this Working Group are meant to strengthen, not replace, the role of the UNHCR.

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

35. Reaffirm the importance of the rights to seek asylum and to non-refoulment. In recent years the international community has placed a growing emphasis on country of origin issues such as repatriation, internally displaced persons, and early warning of emergencies. While these approaches should be encouraged when they can resolve existing refugee crises or avert new ones, caution must be used in ensuring that legitimate refugee flows are not deterred.

36. Encourage governments in cooperation with the international community to find new approaches for addressing non-traditional refugee situations that are not covered by the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. The OAU Convention and the Cartagena Declaration are steps in this direction. Non-traditional refugee situations are often caused by the breakdown of states, civil war, and repression where people are fleeing their country because they fear falling victim to a generalized state of violence.

37.1 Call for the creation of an early warning system to alert the international community to deteriorating human rights situations and potential causes of refugee flow. Early warning of refugee flow would enable the refugee organizations to prepare more effective relief operations and could mobilize human rights bodies to address the causes of the displacement and seek remedy for them.

37.2 Encourage better flow of information between the U.N. Human Rights Centre and other specialized agencies and political bodies.

37.3 Call on the U.N. Commission on Human Rights to prepare an annual review of human rights situations that could give rise to mass exoduses in specific countries. This would enable the Commission to address the root causes of refugee flows and hold governments accountable for them.

37.4 Require the Commission on Human Rights to bring to the attention of the Secretary General situations of rapidly deteriorating human rights conditions that have potential to create refugee flows.

38. Strengthen the mandate and capability of the U.N. Center for Human Rights to enable it to monitor and collect human rights information on a worldwide basis, identify situations that could contribute to refugee flows, and alert the Secretary-General when action is needed.

39.1 Call attention to the special protection needs of refugee and displaced women, in particular the need for protection against sexual assault. At present, the possibility for assault exists throughout the refugee and displacement experience: during flight, while in refuge and during the return and reintegration process.

39.2 Design assistance programs to meet the protection needs of refugee women. More women protection officers should be deployed to assist refugee and displaced women. U.N. human rights programs that focus on the specific need of women should give special importance to the plight of refugee and displaced women.

40. Attend to the impact of the global AIDS pandemic on the movement of peoples, as well as on the treatment of refugees and displaced persons, noting particularly the issues raised with respect to freedom of movement and access to medical care. HIV/AIDS must not be used as a barrier to political asylum claims, nor result in detention.

41. Require more consistent use of emergency powers by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights by authorizing Commission rapporteurs and representatives to make periodic reports on serious human rights situations to Commission members and the Secretary General so that action can be taken between sessions of the Commission.

42.1 Encourage the Commission on Human Rights to increase its use of human rights monitors to report on human rights situations, to seek to deter abuse, and to provide for follow-up action.

42.2 Require that any human rights monitors appointed by the Commission on Human Rights to work with the thematic or country rapporteurs be instructed to

monitor internally displaced persons, contact local authorities about protection problems, advise when conditions are safe to return home, and monitor the safety of the return process.

42.3 Encourage an Increased Role for the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in protecting Internally Displaced persons.

42.4 Give serious consideration to the recommendations made by Ambassador Francis Deng in his report on how human rights protection for internally displaced persons should be enhanced, and support the greater involvement of the Commission in this issue.

43. Recognize that special attention needs to be paid to the unique protection needs of refugee children.

44. Call upon governments that have not done so to ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, which are still the bedrock for the international protection of refugees.

45.1 Acknowledge that Governments have not fulfilled their responsibility as regards refugee status determination. Status determination has been systematically subordinated to political considerations; it is often delayed for years; the ambiguity between "political" refugees and "economic migrants" is widely exploited to deny refugee situations of today in which people are fleeing life threatening situations but who may not have an individual claim based on one of the 5 categories of the 1951 Convention. At present governments apply widely differing interpretations.

45.2 Consider recommending an independent body, or individual to review status determination procedures. This could fall within the responsibilities of a Special Commissioner for Human Rights.

46.1 Ensure that repatriation be voluntary. The repatriation of refugees--on the increase since the end of the Cold War--creates new protection issues. Refugees must not be forced to return to countries plagued by civil war or other physical hazards (i.e. old mine fields).

46.2 Endorse a review of the UNHCR mandate, to expand its protection role in repatriation.

46.3 Encourage UN human rights bodies to exercise greater oversight over repatriation. A Special Commissioner for Human Rights could serve this purpose.

47. Ensure that the Human Rights Commission focus first on the monitoring of violations, rather than on offering technical assistance.

48. Allow and invite human rights NGOs to use their fact-finding expertise to monitor the protection of returnees.

49.1 Recognize the special problems of environmental refugees as a human rights issue.

49.2 Call for the development of appropriate measures to protect environmental refugees and to prevent the catastrophes that cause them to flee their homes.

F. Working Group on Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Initiatives

Peacekeeping

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

50.1 Include human rights work within peacekeeping operations as has begun in operations such as ONUSAL (El Salvador) and UNTAC (Cambodia).

50.2 Include in all peacekeeping operations a human rights mandate. At the very least, the Department of Peacekeeping should employ a human rights specialist, preferably with links to the UN Centre for Human Rights so as to ensure the closest possible cooperation between New York and Geneva. A Special Commissioner for Human Rights could fulfill such a need.

50.3 Call for an analysis, under the direction of the Human Rights Centre, of the links between peacekeeping and human rights. The Centre should be encouraged to draw upon the expertise of the NGO community.

51. Recognize in peacekeeping operations--where serious trade-offs are being made in the interests of reaching agreement--the danger of including amnesty laws that can easily turn into an endorsement of impunity.

52. Include in all peacekeeping special provisions to meet the needs of victims of past abuse, particularly torture.

53. Include in all peacekeeping packages a provision for human rights education.

54. Consider in all cases the impact of a large UN peacekeeping force on the local population, and to the longer term implications of such a presence.

55.1 Consider the problems presented by peacekeeping operations that are usually planned only for the short-term. Attention must be paid to the question of what happens once the UN force withdraws. This issue points to a clear role for the Commission on Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights.

55.2 Recognize the need to be flexible in extending peacekeeping operations if they are seen not to have achieved their goal in reestablishing social peace.

56.1 Ensure that the UN Human Rights Commission and its Special Rapporteurs/experts maintain an oversight function in peacekeeping operations.

56.2 Ensure that they take up the role of monitoring the human rights situation after the peacekeeping force is withdrawn (i.e. the work of Pedro Niken in El Salvador).

57. Address the need to enhance and enforce legal provisions to protect the environment during armed conflict. Problems ranging from the targeting of food and water supplies, to deliberate oil spills, to the use of dangerous chemical defoliants, all destroy the environment and violate fundamental human rights.

Humanitarian Initiatives

58.1 Recognize the distinct roles of humanitarian relief and human rights protection, and the need for better communications between humanitarian agencies that provide on-the-ground relief and the UN human rights bodies.

58.2 Encourage increased communication between these two types of organizations, but without jeopardizing the relief organizations' right to remain in the countries where they are working.

59. Implement reforms that will make the Human Rights Commission more responsive to emergencies.

60.1 Affirm and address the needs of the internally displaced and other victims of war, as articulated in the Second Additional Protocol of the Geneva Conventions (relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflict).

60.2 Call on all governments who have not already done so, to ratify the Second Additional Protocol.

G. Working Group on International Law and Judicial Reform

As the United Nations grows in both strength and responsibility, it must begin to address the need to recognize the rights and responsibilities of individuals as well as of governments. Human rights protection for the citizens of the world, as currently constituted under international law, is inadequate. Individuals must be protected. Individual victims must be heard. And individual abusers must be made accountable.

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

61.1 Support efforts to increase the application of international law to individuals and to extend legal standing to individuals and communities.

61.2 Recognize that establishing an international criminal court and expanding on the rights of individuals to petition are important steps in this process.

62. Recognize the rights of individuals and communities to petition to U.N. treaty supervisory bodies as a matter of right, as it is in the American Convention and generally has been (optionally) in the European Convention.

63. Call for the adoption of an optional protocol for the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

64. Examine the advantages and modalities for the establishment and strengthening of regional courts of human rights.

65. Call for the creation of a World Court of Human Rights. This should probably be an appeals court, not recognizing the right of individuals to original jurisdiction.

66. Encourage the development of an International Criminal Court which should, initially, be restricted to certain specific crimes, including war crimes, genocide, torture and international terrorism, perhaps trafficking in drugs. Discrete areas of jurisdiction between the international human rights and criminal courts need to be recognized.

67. Establish judicial mechanisms as permanent bodies instead of ad hoc, in order to avoid selective, politicized use of international judicial mechanisms.

68. Call for the drafting of an International Bill of Rights to safeguard individuals from abuses by new U.N. legal bodies. Such a bill of rights and safeguards should be incorporated into a comprehensive plan for reform of the U.N., since the fundamental nature of the U.N. would change as it acquires authority over individuals.

69. Consider the following, fundamental change in the process of adopting international human rights treaties: after treaties have been drafted and adopted for signature and ratification, instead of States "contracting in" to a treaty through a process of formal parliamentary ratification and specification of reservations, (often taking decades) States would, as of specified date, be considered to have adopted the treaty. As of the effective date, States would be subject to the provisions of the treaty unless they formally "contract out" of some or all of the provisions.

III. Additional Recommendations

A. The U.N. Commission on Human Rights

This Coalition, through this World Conference Satellite Meeting, calls on the governments of the World Conference on Human Rights to:

70. Consider upgrading the Commission on Human Rights to a Council.

71. Mandate the Commission on Human Rights to study discrimination based on sexual orientation. In particular, interrelated discrimination based on race, gender, economics or abuses stemming from religious intolerance should be given special attention. The study should be produced with the goal of strengthening existing structures and establishing effective protective mechanisms, including declarations, protocols to existing covenants and with consideration for developing a convention.

72. Call on the Commission to appoint a U.N. Special Rapporteur on gender-discrimination and violence against women. The Rapporteur should be authorized to:

(a) Receive and report on information from governments, non-governmental organizations and inter-governmental institutions.

(b) Respond effectively to allegations of violations against women.

(c) Recommend measures to prevent continuing violations.

73. Ensure that the Special Rapporteur on Discrimination against HIV-infected people or people with AIDS be given full and adequate resources and technical assistance, and aided in the fulfillment of his mandate through critical reporting by governments, increased participation of the specialized agencies and the contribution of information by NGOs, both human rights and AIDS service organizations.

B. The United Nations Centre for Human Rights

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

74. Call for the creation, at the Human Rights Centre, of an information system or documentation center on human rights conditions worldwide that could be used as a resource for U.N. decision-making on human rights issues.

75. Increase the operational role of the Centre by allowing it to send monitors to countries where there are serious human rights problems.

76. Allocate additional financial and staff resources to the Centre in order that it may assume a greater protection role.

77. Strengthen the New York office of the Centre for Human Rights.

C. Technology, Communications and Administrative Reform

The World Conference on Human Rights and the United Nations, in its human rights bodies, offices and mechanisms, should:

78. Establish a computerized information management system in the U.N. Centre for Human Rights consistent with the needs of the human rights treaty bodies. In addition to the functions recommended by the 1989/90 task force on computerization (E/CN.4/1990/39), the system needs to be able to access statistical data held by other divisions of the U.N. and specialized agencies and to create integrated country files. To finance the computerization, a pledging session should be held at the World Conference on Human Rights for contributions to the special voluntary fund set up for this purpose.

79. Make more systematic application of scientific procedures and methodologies for protecting and promoting human rights. The U.N. Human Rights Centre, Committees, Commissions, and special rapporteurs responsible for human rights should avail themselves of the expertise of scientists, social scientists, health professionals, engineers, and societies representing the scientific community that are active in the human rights field both in their own functioning and in the provision of advisory services.

80. Improve the quality and availability of statistical data within the U.N. system for purposes of monitoring the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights. An inventory should be made of relevant data within the U.N. and specialized agencies. Better coordination of data collection and analysis should be undertaken so as to avoid duplication. To make statistical data more useful for monitoring human rights performance, there is a particular need for desegregation based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes and the development of time series formats. Technical assistance should be provided to make official statistics more relevant and credible for purposes of evaluating human rights performance.

81. Coordinate and facilitate the involvement of nongovernmental organizations and research centers in monitoring human rights so as to complement official government reports with a "bottom-up" approach. To promote broader participation in the reporting process, encourage governments to consult with NGOs in preparing reports and make human rights reports and relevant statistical data from U.N. publications widely and inexpensively available to interested organizations in hard copy and electronic media.

82. Provide adequate resources to the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights.

83. Support training of UN personnel and independent experts to ensure they have the sensitivity and competence to adequately address human rights abuses based on sexual orientation.

84. Ensure that specialized agencies provide technical assistance and training to identify, support and strengthen domestic and international efforts to advocate for lesbians, gay men and other sexual minorities.

85. Encourage the UN to review its own contracting, employment and benefit policies to ensure that there is no discrimination at the UN against lesbian and gay employees or their partners.

86. Establish training programs for U.N. human rights and humanitarian relief personnel and for independent experts to ensure that they will address human rights abuses specific to women and carry out their work without gender-bias.

87. Begin periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of the U.N. monitoring, reporting and complaints procedures, as well as its advisory services and training programs in addressing, and devising more effective responses to, violations of women's human rights.

88. Require all UN bodies and specialized agencies to increase their cooperation and communication and to join their resources to control and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS with full respect for human rights.

89. Recognize the important distinction between those bodies that investigate and monitor human rights violations and those that authorize sanctions in response to gross violations.

D. Treaties and Treaty Monitoring Bodies

The World Conference on Human Rights should call on all member states to:

90. Ratify or accede to the major human rights treaties. This should become a prerequisite to sitting on the Commission on Human Rights.

91. Ratify without reservations, limitations, declarations or understanding. Those states who have ratified in the past with such limitations should review them with a view to removing them.

In addition, the World Conference should call on the U.N. Treaty Monitoring Bodies, and give them the authority and resources to:

92. Subject to close scrutiny any derogations to treaty obligations during a state of emergency.

93. Complete rapidly the current work in the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Recommendations should be sent to the Commission on Human Rights as well as to the individual states. Resolution 1992/35 of the Commission--calling for the establishment of a

habeas corpus procedure--should be implemented by all states and formally incorporated into the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

94. Call for a special report from any state at any time. Treaty-monitoring bodies should also be able to make interim recommendations.

95. Include as members only individuals who are independent of all government influence and pressure. No member of any treaty-monitoring body should be allowed to hold a government office in any country. States parties should not elect individuals for service on treaty-monitoring bodies who do not fulfill these criteria.

96. Ensure that states submit the periodic reports requested by the treaty-monitoring bodies, on time and true to the guidelines issued by the body.

97. Include in regional seminars, held under the auspices of the advisory services program, government officials, treaty-monitoring body members and nongovernmental organizations. Seminars should include components for evaluation and follow-up.

98. Follow-up on failed reporting by governments. A state must not be allowed to escape scrutiny by the treaty bodies simply by its own failure to provide the necessary reports. A limit should be placed on postponements.

99. Publicize their role, methods of work, schedule of meetings, the time-table of reports under consideration and the conclusions reached in respect to particular countries. In addition to regular press briefings and reports the treaty-monitoring bodies should publish all state reports, records, and conclusions in U.N. composite documents and make these available in U.N. Information Centres.

100. Allow and facilitate much more NGO input into the treaty review process.

101. Adopt and develop a General Comments or Recommendations feature, particular to the needs of the treaty-monitoring bodies. Draft texts should be widely disseminated to allow broad input, including from the NGO community.

102. Integrate treaty-monitoring work into the mainstream of U.N. human rights work. Regular and extensive contact should be established between the treaty-monitoring bodies and the Commission on Human Rights. The Commission's country and theme mechanisms, for example, should take into account the reports of the treaty-monitoring bodies.

103. Establish a documentation center at the Centre for Human Rights. Information exchange between the various treaty bodies should be extensive and well coordinated.

104. Upgrade seriously the technological resources available to the treaty-monitoring bodies and their staff, with a particular emphasis on computerization, communications equipment, and data retrieval and storage.

105. Increase communication and cooperation with regional human rights bodies and mechanisms.

106. Establish a provision to allow non-state actors, including individuals, to bring complaints before treaty bodies.

107. Secure regular U.N. funding, as well as an increase in other resources.

108. Improve the effectiveness of treaty monitoring bodies dealing with economic, social and cultural rights. Undertake a broad external review of the organization, structure, and effectiveness of their monitoring systems. Adopt a policy of experimenting with alternative reporting and monitoring procedures.

E. Theme Mechanisms

The World Conference on Human Rights should call on U.N. Theme Mechanisms, and give them the authority and resources to:

109. Facilitate communications between petitioners and governments. Copies of government responses should be sent to the sources of the complaint, and vice versa. The confidentiality of the source should be protected when necessary.

110. Set time limits on government responses to complaints. If no response is made before a specified deadline, the theme mechanisms should be able to treat any other reliable sources of information as valid and act as appropriate. Governments who routinely fail to respond should be brought to the attention of the Commission on Human Rights.

111. Submit country dossiers to the Commission on Human Rights in severe cases of human rights violations, or when there are patterns of abuse in a particular country.

112. Maintain and report pending cases. Statistics on pending cases--by country--should be included in the annual reports.

113. Establish clear criteria for determining whether or not a country has made a full and satisfactory reply. A case should be maintained as pending until a satisfactory reply is received.

114. Follow-up after individual cases (i.e. to provide compensation, medical treatment, rehabilitation, etc.).

115. Respond to group violations, even in the absence of specific, or individual case reports. The theme mechanism should be able to arrange an on-site visit if necessary.

116. Make on-site visits a more regular part of the work of the theme mechanisms. Adequate financial and staff resources will need to be provided. Repeated requests for visits, and any failure to arrange or be permitted an on-site visit, should be reported to the Commission on Human Rights.

117. Require government response to recommendations from on-site visits. Only specific responses to each allegation should constitute a satisfactory response. Any pending cases should be reported to the Commission on Human Rights. In

addition, reports of on-site visits should always be published as separate addenda to the main reports for easier dissemination.

118. Make routine follow-up visits a regular feature of the on-site reporting process. One theme mechanism may find it necessary to recommend a follow-up visit by another theme mechanism.

119. Begin joint on-site visits by different theme mechanisms. Joint teams should also be able to make joint recommendations. The mechanisms should also be able to request expert help for on-site visits (i.e. medical or forensic experts).

120. Undertake special studies of violations against women and children, and generate specific recommendations to protect them. Visiting teams must include women.

121. Establish regular and structured opportunities for communication, coordination and cooperation among all the various theme mechanisms. Representatives from each mechanism should meet together at least once a year, and NGO participation in this annual meeting should be encouraged and facilitated. The theme mechanisms should submit a report from these meetings, with recommendations for strengthening their work, to the Commission on Human Rights.

122. Establish a central documentation center at the Centre for Human Rights, to be available to theme mechanisms and other U.N. human rights bodies. Country dossiers should be available containing all relevant U.N. and other source material relating to particular countries. This should include information from other U.N. agencies (not just those relating specifically to human rights) as well.

123. Upgrade the technological resources available to the staff of the theme mechanisms. Computerization of the Centre for Human Rights should proceed as a matter of the highest priority.

124. Participate actively in the drafting of new international instruments for the protection of human rights, including participation in working groups and drafting sessions.

125. Publish, through the Commission on Human Rights, a comprehensive compilation of recommendations made by each theme mechanism over the years. This should be published as a regular U.N. document, up-dated periodically, and used as a set of minimum standards for all governments. The theme mechanisms should also monitor progress based on these standards.

126. Secure a significant increase in resources, both financial and staff.

F. The Human Rights of Gay Men and Lesbians

In order to protect the human rights of Gay Men and Lesbians, the United Nations and the World Conference on Human Rights must:

127. Recognize that lesbians, gay men and other sexual minorities are entitled to all the fundamental human rights free from any form of discrimination and to this end call for the following steps to be taken:

128. Ensure that the U.N. Treaty Committees, thematic and country rapporteurs and working groups, independent experts, and all bodies entrusted with protecting human rights address violations based on sexual orientation.

129. Ensure that all future U.N. conferences make the necessary provisions for the full participation of lesbians, gay men and other sexual minorities as UN representatives, government delegates and UN representatives, noting that many countries have legislation to prohibit entry of, or otherwise discriminate against lesbians, gay men and other sexual minorities, making their participation in conferences in such countries difficult or impossible.

130. Ensure that human rights defenders, for whose protection the UN expresses a special concern, will include the many people working at the local, national and international levels to document and resist human rights abuses against, or advocate for the equal enjoyment of civil, political, cultural and economic rights of, lesbians, gay men and other sexual minorities.

G. Torture

Recognizing that torture, even systematic and authorized, is still practiced by many governments of the world (including U.N. member states) the U.N. and the government delegations to the World Conference on Human Rights must:

131. Support the pledging session at the World Conference on Human Rights for the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

132. Establish an outreach program to educate nations, NGOs, and individuals about the U.N. Voluntary fund for Victims of Torture, as some rehabilitation programs may be unaware of this resource.

133. Recognize that program staff in many countries--particularly in the developing world--are often vulnerable to harassment and intimidation. Support from the U.N. Fund both provides necessary financial assistance, and also gives these programs international credibility and protection.

134. Acknowledge that providing treatment to victims of torture is an essential basis for protecting human rights and for ensuring the growth of democratic societies, and that the victims need to be reintegrated into society.

135. Make clear to all governments and to the peoples of the world that torture *is not* an acceptable practice.

H. Indigenous Peoples' Rights

Recognizing the need to rectify past abuses and injustices practiced against the Indigenous Peoples' of the world, the World Conference on Human Rights should:

136. Ensure a substantive and meaningful discussion of the issue of Indigenous Peoples' Rights during the World Conference. This subject must not be relegated to the margins of World Conference discussion and debate by reducing it to no more than a visual "celebration" or "commemoration".

137. Strengthen the Rights of Self Determination of all peoples by insuring a full opportunity for indigenous peoples and for all people who are the victims of colonialism to participate in the preparatory process of the World Conference. And state that indigenous peoples have the Human Right to receive respect for their tradition and environment.

138. Express support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and call for its rapid approval, ratification and implementation.

139. Recognize that protection of the natural environment of indigenous peoples is essential to protection of their right to life and to the maintenance of their cultural identity. There is an urgent need for attention to cases of physical destruction of indigenous communities or destruction of indigenous cultures. The role of natural resources in the physical and cultural preservation of indigenous peoples must receive adequate attention and the World Conference should acknowledge the right of indigenous peoples to maintain the integrity of the environment free of outside interference.

I. Reform in United Nations Representation and Participation

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

140. Examine proposals for a more equitable system of UN representation, broader NGO participation and more reliable sources of revenue to strengthen the United Nations. Specialized functions of the UN system cannot be effective without strong political institutions at its core.

141. Devote adequate attention to the right to popular participation and the right to information, both of which figure significantly in matters that affect the status of groups rendered vulnerable in the past such as women, minorities, indigenous peoples, and that also affect the condition of the environment.

142. Note the striking absence of women in the policy- and decision-making processes of both states and international organizations and examine ways and means to increase the participation of women in international, national, and local legislative, judicial and administrative bodies, including the United Nations itself, recognizing the importance of their participation to the implementation of existing human rights standards and instruments.

J. Development and Human Rights

In order to bring together U.N. and other international work on development and human rights, the World Conference on Human Rights should:

143. Recognize the Right to Development as a Human Right.

144. Call for increased communication and for increased policy, program and project coordination between U.N. bodies, offices and agencies dealing with development (in particular the United Nations Development Programme) and the U.N. Centre for Human Rights and other U.N human rights bodies.

145. Recognize the fundamental link between development and the protection of all human rights; economic, social, cultural, civil, and political.

146. Examine the impact of the policies of international, multi-lateral lending institutions (in particular the World Bank and the IMF) on the human rights situations in countries where these policies are implemented. A system to make these institutions more accountable, especially for any negative impact, must be developed.

147. Discuss the effects of development projects sponsored by multilateral development banks that do not adequately account for adverse environmental effects and their human rights consequences--such as contamination of air, land and water and dislocation of communities and peoples.

148. Support sustainable development and address the environmental components of sustainable development. Because sustainable development and environmental protection are inextricably intertwined, discussion of the right to development must incorporate the right to a sustaining environment.

149. Reaffirm the fact that sustainable development is impossible without the integration of women in the process of development, and recognize the necessity of the participation of women in creating conditions whereby everyone may enjoy the rights set out in the International Covenants on Human Rights and other human rights treaties. The role of women should be especially emphasized when formulating forward-looking strategies on sustainable development, popular participation and democratic institutions.

K. Human Rights and the Global AIDS Pandemic

In order to increase United Nations participation and effectiveness in the world-wide effort against AIDS, the World Conference on Human Rights should:

150. Ensure that the primacy of the principle of non-discrimination be communicated to and applied by all governments and international agencies in their efforts to control the spread of HIV/AIDS.

151. Ensure that all bodies entrusted with the promotion or protection of human rights, including specialized agencies, UN treaty committees, thematic and country rapporteurs and working groups, and independent experts address AIDS-specific violations in the areas that fall within their mandate.

152. Secure broad NGO participation, including AIDS service organizations, in World Conference proceedings.

153. Call on all governments to include information and analysis of HIV/AIDS specific issues in background documentation prepared for the World Conference.

154. Urge the UN Human Rights Centre to incorporate HIV/AIDS specific information and analysis into all background studies prepared for the World Conference.

L. Minority Rights

The World Conference on Human Rights should:

155. Call on the U.N. and all member states to implement fully and properly the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious, or Linguistic Minorities, adopted in December 1992. The Declaration should be translated and disseminated.

156. Establish the advisory services and specialized training proposed by the Commission on Human Rights.

157. Establish a Special Commissioner for Minority Rights to examine and report publicly on the rights of persons belonging to minorities, and in particular as regards emerging conflicts that affect them. As conflict among national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities often escalates rapidly into violent confrontations, it is essential that the Special Commissioner provide an early warning of possible conflict, and, if possible, contribute to any efforts to foster communication and dialogue among parties through such means as the use of regular hearing procedures, including those held in the region or countries where disputes exist.

158. Call on all U.N. special mechanisms on minorities to consult regularly with a subcommittee and staff of the U.N. Security Council. Reports from the special mechanisms should be shared in these consultations, as well as with the Commission on Human Rights.

159. Review the report and implement the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Disability (1991).

160. Recommend that all U.N. bodies accord the implementation of the Declaration the very highest priority, and provide every possible incentive for cooperation and confidence building. The UN Advisory Technical Assistance Program should be made available upon receipt of a request from a member of or representative of a minority.

161. Establish a UN Voluntary Fund for the support of bodies working in the field of minority rights, including NGOs. A pledging session should be held at the World Conference.

162. Call upon member states to declare within twelve months of the Conference, in writing, their concrete plans for the implementation of the Declaration, and to provide specific information on the national institution with primary responsibility for the oversight of domestic minority rights.

163. Recommend that the U.N. Subcommittee on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities review the progress of each U.N. member in implementing the Declaration and that this be published in an annual minority rights report, no later than the last day of the first January following the year under consideration.

164. Open a document in which governmental delegates shall record, within twelve months, their policies regarding the granting of overseas aid, commercial credits and other preferences, either through their representatives on the boards of multi-lateral development banks or directly, to countries where the Declaration is not being implemented, according to the U.N.'s annual minority rights report.

M. Protection for Human Rights Defenders

Recognizing the irreplacable and life-saving role of human rights defenders the world over, the World Conference on Human Rights should:

165. Affirm in its final declaration the rights of human rights defenders and support their efforts to conduct their own work free from reprisals or harassment.

Appendix 1

Washington
NGO Coalition
UN World Conference on Human Rights
Satellite Meeting
February 23, 1993

AGENDA

MORNING SESSION
Chair: Audrey Chapman, *American Association for the Advancement of Science*

9:00 Exchange/Distribution of documents/Coffee, etc.

9:15 Welcome and Introduction
Audrey Chapman, *AAAS*

9:30 Presentations

1. Structural/institutional reform in the UN
   James O'Dea, *Amnesty International USA*
2. Refugee Policy
   Refugee Policy Group
3. Peacekeeping/humanitarian initiatives
   Ian Guest, *International Human Rights Law Group*
4. Integration of social, economic, and cultural rights
   Audrey Chapman, *AAAS*
5. The human rights of women
   Dorothy Thomas, *Human Rights Watch*
   Donna Sullivan, *International Human Rights Law Group*
6. Indigenous rights
   Steven Tullberg, *Indian Law Resource Center*
7. World and regional judicial reform
   William Pace, *Center for the Development of International Law*
   Craig Baab, *American Bar Association*
8. Human rights education as a human right
   Shulamith Koenig, *The Decade of Human Rights*
9. Development and human rights
   Linda Rabben, *Rainforest Foundation*

11:00 Working Groups on Recommendations

12:30 Lunch

AFTERNOON SESSION
Chair: Mark Brown, *Lutheran Office of Government Affairs*

1:30 Reports from Working Groups

2:45 General Discussion
*on recommendations and areas of concern
*as a Coalition, where do we go from here?

4:00 Preparation for Press Briefing

4:45 Closing remarks

UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Dist
GENERAL

A/CONF.157/PC/82
14 April 1993

WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Preparatory Committee
Fourth Session
Geneva, 19-30 April 1993
Item 9 of the provisional agenda

CONSIDERATION OF THE FINAL OUTCOME OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE PREPARATORY WORK AND THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE REGIONAL MEETINGS

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 46/116, requested the Secretary-General to encourage initiatives at the national, regional and international levels designed to make the World Conference process a success. The Secretary-General was also requested to provide the Preparatory Committee with all necessary assistance.

2. The General Assembly further decided, by paragraph 7 (a) (ii) of its resolution 47/122, that the question of the final outcome of the World Conference should be taken up by the Preparatory Committee at its fourth session, taking into consideration, inter alia, the preparatory work and conclusions of the regional meetings held at Tunis, San José and Bangkok.

3. Accordingly, in a spirit of consensus building and with the aim of advancing the preparatory process, and in order to help ensure the success of the Conference, a working paper containing elements which might be considered for possible inclusion in a draft final document and which could serve as a possible basis for discussion, is annexed. The working paper contains ideas and elements drawn from the preparatory process, including the declarations adopted by the above-mentioned regional meetings and suggestions made in many reports submitted by Governments and organizations from all parts of the world. It is based on the relevant General Assembly resolutions, including 45/155, 46/116 and 47/122 and reflects central themes of the World Conference, human rights, democracy and development.

ANNEX

WORKING PAPER*

ELEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION IN A DRAFT FINAL DOCUMENT

Having met in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993 to discuss and take action on the six objectives of the World Conference set forth in General Assembly resolution 45/155 of 18 December 1990;

Affirming that the human being is the central subject of human rights and should be an active participant and the principal beneficiary of these rights;

Underlining that the achievement of international co-operation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion is one of the purposes of the United Nations in accordance with article 1 of the Charter;

Recalling the Preamble to the Charter, in particular the determination to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small;

Further recalling the determination expressed in the Preamble to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to establish conditions under which justice and respect for international law obligations can be maintained, to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, to practice tolerance and good neighbourliness, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples;

Emphasizing that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two International Covenants on Human Rights constitute a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations;

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* Unedited text

Recognizing that the present world situation is full of challenges and opportunities for building an international order of true democracy, freedom and justice and that, in this era of change, new approaches should be sought to strengthen the United Nations machinery in the field of human rights in order to further the objective of universal respect for and observance of international human rights standards;

Seeking to enhance respect for human rights by way of cooperation in the spirit of the United Nations Charter;

Taking note with appreciation of the declarations adopted by the three regional meetings at Tunis, San José and Bangkok and bearing in mind the suggestions made by Governments and organizations in multiple reports from all parts of the world during the preparatory process leading to the World Conference.

Drawing on central themes of the World Conference: human rights, democracy and development;

The World Conference on Human Rights solemnly adopts the following Principles and Programme of Human Rights Action:

Principle 1:

The promotion and protection of human rights are essential to the full achievement of the other purposes of the United Nations: the maintenance of international peace and security, the development of friendly relations among nations based on the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the achievement of international cooperation in solving problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and the harmonization of actions by nations in the attainment of these goals.

Principle 2:

The promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms must be given priority within the Organization in accordance with the purposes of the United Nations. The United Nations system should adopt a comprehensive strategy aimed at including the human rights dimension in all

activities. It is therefore imperative that the various organs and specialized agencies further enhance the coordination of their activities which must be built upon the consistent and objective application of international human rights standards.

Principle 3:

All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent. The universality of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights requires that every State throughout the world recognize, protect, respect and promote internationally recognized human rights standards, whatever the State's level of economic or political development. Regional and national specificities must contribute to the strengthening of the universality of human rights. The exercise of any human right must not be denied because the full enjoyment of other rights has not been achieved. It is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Principle 4:

The processes of promoting and protecting human rights, which are a legitimate concern of the international community, are to be understood in the framework of respect for the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence of States.

Principle 5:

Democracy is an essential condition for the full and effective enjoyment of all human rights and a main condition for genuine and sustainable development. Democracy is based on the freely expressed will of the people and their full participation in all aspects of their lives. The international community should give full support to United Nations action for the strengthening and spreading of democratization throughout the world. Democratic Governments must make all efforts for the effective enjoyment of human rights by their peoples. When democratic governments are making such efforts, human rights problems must not be used as a reason against political and / or socio-economic cooperation.

Principle 6:

The right to development is an inalienable human right. Its enjoyment must be continuously monitored at the international, regional and national levels. Lasting progress towards its implementation requires effective development policies at the national level and equitable economic relations and a favourable economic environment at the international level, with due regard for the right of peoples to control their natural wealth and resources.

Principle 7:

There is an essential need to create favourable conditions for the effective enjoyment of human rights at both the national and international levels. States, the international community and international organizations must strive to eliminate violations of human rights and obstacles of any kind to the observance of human rights.

Principle 8:

Respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all human beings without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion is a fundamental rule of international human rights law. The speedy and comprehensive elimination of all forms of racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance is a priority task for the international community. Governments, individuals, groups, institutions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to intensify their efforts in cooperating and coordinating their activities against this evil.

Principle 9:

The equal rights of women and men in the enjoyment of all human rights is a fundamental rule of human rights law. The equal participation of women in the political, economic, social and cultural life, at both national and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of hidden or overt discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives. Gender-based violence and all forms of sexual exploitation must be eliminated. The human rights of women should form an integral part of the United Nations Human Rights Programme.

Principle 10:

The World Conference reaffirms the obligation of States to respect the rights of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and indigenous peoples, in particular the standards on equality, dignity, identity, non-discrimination and preferential treatment, and urges all Governments to institute effective measures for the implementation of existing international human rights instruments in this field. The prevention of conflicts requires more active and effective implementation of the existing standards within a comprehensive approach as reflected in the Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace.

Principle 11:

The World Conference, on the occasion of the International Year for the World's Indigenous People, recognizes the unique contribution of indigenous peoples to our societies and reaffirms the commitment of the international community to their economic, social and cultural well-being and to their full participation in all aspects of society. States have an obligation to respect the identities of indigenous peoples and to recognize the value and diversity of their cultures, as well as forms of social organizations.

Principle 12:

The World Conference, welcoming the success which the Convention on the Rights of the Child has enjoyed through the early ratification by a large number of States, urges the implementation of the Convention, in particular through the establishment of national and international mechanisms and programmes for the defence and protection of children and adolescents, in particular the girl child, abandoned children, street children and refugee children. The rights of the child should be a priority in the United Nations system wide action on human rights.

Principle 13:

Utmost importance must be given to the promotion and protection of the human rights of vulnerable groups, the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them, and the development of additional norms for their protection when necessary. States have an obligation to create and maintain

adequate measures at the national level, not least in the fields of education, health and social support, for the promotion and protection of the rights of the vulnerable sectors of their populations and the involvement of these persons in the solution of their own problems.

Principle 14:

The World Conference recognizes the significant achievement in the codification and progressive development of international human rights standards. The universal acceptance of the major human rights treaties is imperative, in particular the International Covenants on Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Principle 15:

The administration of justice and an independent judiciary, in full conformity with internationally accepted standards, are crucial to the full realization of human rights and indispensable to the processes of democracy and development. The attainment of this objective requires substantial investment in the establishment and strengthening of institutions and the training of officials, and governments and international organizations must recognize and provide the necessary resources to the accomplishment of this task.

Principle 16:

Political freedom cannot be fully achieved outside the context of economic, social and cultural rights. To strengthen the enjoyment of these rights, additional substantive and procedural provisions, including the right of petition, should be examined in the context of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, together with a system of indicators to measure progress in the realization of the rights set forth in that Covenant and in other international instruments, including the international labour standards.

Principle 17:

The responsibility for the implementation and promotion of human rights rests primarily with States. The monitoring by intergovernmental organizations of compliance with the international standards should be carried out in an objective, impartial and non-selective manner. The Commission on Human Rights, its subsidiary organs and the treaty bodies, as well as specialized agencies such as ILO and UNESCO, are encouraged to further strengthen their supervisory efforts.

Principle 18:

Faced with massive violations of human rights and humanitarian law or imminent threat thereof, the United Nations should develop means to respond more effectively and more speedily to such situations, including genocide, extrajudicial executions and other indiscriminate killings, enforced or involuntary disappearances, torture, flagrant acts of racism and racial discrimination, slavery, armed attacks on civilians, and the blocking of humanitarian relief. All components of the United Nations system should coordinate their responses to these situations. Particular attention should be paid to the building up of an adequate international system for flexible and rapid preventive and corrective action for the promotion of and respect for human rights and humanitarian law.

Principle 19:

The World Conference expresses grave concern about continuing human rights violations despite international standards and about the lack of effective remedies for the victims.

Principle 20:

The World Conference reiterates the duty of States, established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to direct education to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Such education shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. Accordingly, human rights education and the dissemination of information about human

rights, both theoretical and practical, are essential functions for promoting and encouraging respect for human rights for all without distinction as to race, sex language or religion, and should be undertaken as priority objectives of educational policies at both the national and international levels.

Principle 21:

A programme of development cooperation, including technical assistance and advisory services which the United Nations can provide to Member States, at their request, could be a major contribution to improving respect for human rights. Such a programme should seek to establish a coherent and comprehensive approach to the improvement and strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Approaches should be developed, implemented and evaluated which aim at improving respect for human rights through the establishment and strengthening of national legislation, institutions and infrastructures which uphold the rule of law, promote human rights training, teaching and education, enhance popular participation and strengthen civil society.

Principle 22:

The full and effective implementation of United Nations action to promote and protect human rights must reflect the priority given to human rights by the Charter and the demands on the United Nations Human Rights Programme, as mandated by Member States, together with the increased and more complex responsibilities embodied in the present Document.

Principle 23:

The establishment of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, by way of constitutional law whenever feasible, should be further encouraged as they can make important contributions to the effective enjoyment of human rights. Alongside other institutions, such as an independent judiciary, national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights can increase awareness of human rights, promote tolerance and dialogue, help ensure respect for human rights, and remedy violations.

Principle 24:

Regional arrangements play a fundamental role in promoting and protecting human rights. The World Conference endorses efforts under way to strengthen these arrangements and to increase their effectiveness, while at the same time stressing the importance of cooperation with the United Nations Human Rights Programme. On the same basis, the World Conference would welcome the creation of regional and sub-regional arrangements of human rights protection where they do not already exist.

Principle 25:

The World Conference pays tribute to the untiring and invaluable efforts of non-governmental organizations in all aspects of human rights and humanitarian activities at the local, national, regional and international levels. Their contributions to standard-setting, monitoring of compliance with existing standards, dissemination of information and the conduct of education, training and research are recognized and their contributions to all human rights activities undertaken by intergovernmental organizations should be facilitated.

Principle 26:

Underlining the importance of objective and impartial information about human rights and humanitarian issues, the World Conference encourages the increased involvement of the media. For this purpose, the media would be guaranteed freedom and protection.

Draft Programme of Action

In light of the above principles, the United Nations Human Rights Programme should now place its emphasis on operational and implementation activities. The World Conference, accordingly, adopts this Programme of Action, as an integral part of the Final Document.

I. United Nations System wide action on Human Rights

1. The World Conference calls for system wide action for human rights and fundamental freedoms within the United Nations as stated in principle 2 above. High level officials of the United Nations and its specialized agencies should meet annually in

order to assess the impact of their strategies and policies on the enjoyment of human rights and to coordinate their programmes and measures for the promotion and protection of human rights.

2. Furthermore, the World Conference calls on regional organizations and prominent international and regional finance and development institutions to contribute to the above-mentioned approach to human rights in their work. These organizations and independent national institutions, whenever applicable, should be invited to participate in these coordination meetings held within the United Nations system.

3. The World Conference recognizes that, within the United Nations Human Rights Programme, there should be constant availability of independent analysis and objective reporting on the human rights situation throughout the world.

4. The World Conference strongly recommends that a concerted effort be made to encourage and facilitate the ratification of and accession or succession to international human rights treaties with the aim of universal acceptance. The year 2000 should be set as a target date for achieving universality and strategy should be devised for achieving this goal. The General Assembly is requested to open a dialogue with States not having accepted the basic human rights treaties and to seek other ways of encouraging ratifications and overcoming obstacles to ratification. Any reservations to and declarations about human rights treaties must be fully compatible with the object and purpose of the treaties concerned.

5. The World Conference, recognizing the need to maintain consistency with the high quality of existing international standards and to avoid proliferation of human rights instruments, reaffirms the guidelines relating to the elaboration of new international instrument contained in General Assembly resolution 41/120 and calls on the United Nations human rights bodies, when considering the elaboration of new international standards, to keep those guidelines in mind, to consult with human rights treaty bodies on the necessity for drafting new standards and to request the Secretariat to carry out technical reviews of proposed new instruments.

6. The World Conference urges all United Nations organs and the specialized agencies whose activities deal with human rights to cooperate in order to rationalize, streamline and evaluate their activities and to avoid duplication.

7. The World Conference recommends that human rights officers be assigned to regional and eventually other offices of the Organization with the primary purpose of disseminating information and offering training and other technical assistance in the field of human rights. Human rights training for international civil servants who are assigned to work relating to human rights should be organized.

8. The World Conference calls for the setting up of machinery for facilitating system wide action in the field of human rights and endorses the designation of the Centre for Human Rights as focal point and coordination unit for this purpose.

9. The World Conference recommends that the Centre for Human Rights be enabled to expeditiously and effectively meet the requirements for collection, analysis and dissemination of information and documentation, training, technical assistance, advisory services, standard-setting, research and studies, implementation procedures, monitoring, early warning, preventive action, and coordination.

10. The World Conference recognizes the positive role of non-governmental organizations at all levels within the United Nations system and, drawing on the procedure established during the preparatory process of this Conference, proposes that those organizations which have participated in the World Conference should have increased access to United Nations human rights fora.

II. Equality, Dignity and Tolerance

A. Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

1. The World Conference considers the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, in particular in their institutionalized forms such as apartheid or resulting from official doctrines of racial superiority or exclusivity, as a primary objective for the United Nations Human Rights Programme and for system-wide action in the field of human rights. United Nations organs and agencies should strengthen their efforts to implement a programme of

action related to the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination as well as subsequent mandates to the same end. The World Conference strongly appeals to all governments, organizations and individuals to generously contribute to the Trust Fund for the Programme for the Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

2. The World Conference urges all Governments to take immediate measures and to develop strong policies to combat new forms of racism, xenophobia or related intolerance, including through the establishment of national institutions to combat such phenomena.

3. The World Conference endorses the decision of the Commission on Human Rights to appoint a Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The World Conference also appeals to all States Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination to make the declaration under article 14 of the Convention.

B. Minorities and Indigenous Peoples

1. The World Conference calls on the Commission on Human Rights to undertake the preparation of an implementation procedure for the Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. In so doing, the Commission should develop objective and impartial methods of dialogue facilitation, confidence-building and dispute resolution for the purpose of preventing conflicts.

2. The World Conference calls on the Working Group on Indigenous Populations to complete the drafting of a declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and urges States and intergovernmental organizations to establish more effective mechanisms for the protection of indigenous peoples' rights.

3. The World Conference urges States and intergovernmental organizations to treat minorities and indigenous peoples and persons belonging to them on the basis of equality. Measures to be taken should include facilitation of their full participation in all aspects of the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of society and at all stages of development

cooperation, possible contributions to state reports under existing treaty obligations, and the possibility of presenting their views to all relevant national, regional and international policy-making and monitoring bodies.

4. The World Conference encourages the Secretary-General and other heads of organizations in the United Nations system to continue employing their good offices, in close cooperation with the States concerned, for the purpose of preventing and resolving human rights problems and conflicts involving minorities and indigenous peoples.

5. The World Conference considers human rights education essential for harmonious relations between communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace. The World Conference therefore urges States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to establish and maintain specific programmes of immediate action for such education.

C. The Status and Human Rights of Women

1. The World Conference recommends that matters related to human rights and status of women be regularly and systematically reviewed by all United Nations mechanisms, including the Commission on Human Rights. Women are encouraged to make more use of existing implementation procedures in their pursuits of equal enjoyment and non-discrimination. In addition, existing monitoring bodies should, whenever applicable, include the status and the human rights of women in their deliberations and findings.

2. The World Conference stresses the importance of promoting and protecting the equal enjoyment by women of all human rights. In particular, the World Conference emphasizes work geared towards the elimination of violence against women in public and private life, the elimination of sexual exploitation and trafficking in women, the proper treatment of women in the administration of justice, and the eradication of any conflicts which may arise between the rights of women and certain traditional or customary practices. The violations of the rights of women in armed conflicts, including in particular murder and rape, require a particularly effective response and prosecution.

3. The World Conference supports all measures by the United Nations and its specialized agencies to ensure the effective protection and promotion of the human rights of the girl child. Existing laws, customs, regulations and practices which discriminate against the girl child should be abolished.

4. As to new implementation procedures, the World Conference encourages the Commission on Human Rights and CEDAW to examine the possibility of introducing the right of petition by preparing an optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Likewise, the World Conference calls on the Commission on Human Rights to appoint a Special Rapporteur on the human rights of women.

5. The World Conference supports steps taken within the Secretariat to elevate women staff members in accordance with Article 8 of the United Nations Charter and encourages other principal and subsidiary organs of the United Nations to guarantee the participation of women under conditions of equality.

6. The World Conference underlines the importance of the integration and full participation of women in the development process and reiterates the objectives established on global action for women towards sustainable and equitable development set forth in the Rio Declaration.

III. Cooperation, Development and Strengthening of Human Rights

1. The World Conference strongly recommends that a strengthened advisory services and technical cooperation programme be implemented. That programme should make available to States assistance on specific human rights issues, including the preparation of reports under human rights treaties as well as for the implementation of coherent and comprehensive plans of action for human rights promotion and protection. Strengthening the institutions of human rights and democracy, the legal protection of human rights, training of officials and others, broad-based education and public information aimed at creating a culture of respect for human rights should all be available as components of these programmes. The Conference strongly appeals for a significant increase in contributions to the Voluntary Fund for advisory services and technical cooperation.

2. The World Conference recommends that human rights assistance, expertise and the building of legal infrastructures should be central elements in activities for the prevention of conflicts, peace-making, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-restoration.

3. The World Conference recommends that priority be given to national and international action to promote democratization, and free and fair elections, including through assistance in the human rights aspects of elections and public information about elections and to the strengthening of the rule of law and the administration of justice.

4. The World Conference recommends to the General Assembly and other organs and agencies concerned that a global strategy for the implementation of the right to development as a human right should be adopted. The strategy could encompass formulation of criteria for the assessment of progress, including the examination of sample projects, introduction of human rights impact statements for programmes and projects affecting the right, preparation of guidelines on structural adjustment and human rights, identification of internal and external obstacles to the enjoyment of the right with a view to overcoming them, and dissemination of wider knowledge about the right.

5. The World Conference recommends that non-governmental and other grass roots organizations, active in human rights and/ or development, should play a major role on the national and international levels in the debate, activities and implementation relating to the right to development and all aspects of development cooperation.

6. The World Conference calls on the Commission on Human Rights, in cooperation with the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to commence the preparation of optional protocols to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, strengthening selected substantive provisions and allowing for the right of petition. The Committee should also be encouraged, drawing on the expertise of other organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to continue the development of a system of indicators for measuring progress in the realization of economic, social and cultural rights.

IV. Human Rights Education

1. States have a duty to direct education to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as stated in principle 20 above. The World Conference calls on all States and private institutions, as a matter of the highest priority, to include human rights as a subject in the curricula of all learning institutions in formal and non-formal settings and including popular and adult education.

2. Human rights education should focus on democracy, development and social justice, as set forth in international and regional human rights instruments, in order to create a dialogue towards strengthening a universal commitment to human rights among peoples and groups of diverse faiths and cultures.

3. Taking into account the World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy, adopted in March 1993 by the International Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy and other human rights instruments, the World Conference recommends that States develop specific programmes and strategies for ensuring the widest human rights education and the dissemination of public information.

4. Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have a responsibility to initiate and support human rights education and to undertake effective dissemination of public information about human rights. The advisory services and technical assistance programmes of the United Nations system should be able to immediately respond to requests for educational and training activities in the field of human rights. The World Conference endorses suggestions for the proclamation of an United Nations decade for human rights education in order to promote, encourage and focus these educational activities.

V. Implementation and Monitoring Methods

1. The World Conference urges Governments to incorporate human rights standards in domestic legislation and to strengthen national structures, institutions and organs of society which play a role in promoting and safeguarding human rights.

2. The World Conference strongly recommends the convening of an annual meeting of representatives of national institutions to examine ways and means of improving mechanisms and sharing experiences at the national level.

3. The World Conference recommends to the human rights treaty bodies, to the meetings of chairpersons of the treaty bodies and to the meetings of States Parties that they initiate steps aimed at coordinating the multiple reporting requirements and guidelines for preparing State reports under the respective human rights conventions, taking into account the fact that the submission of one overall report on obligations undertaken by each State would make these procedures less burdensome and more effective and increase their impact.

4. The World Conference recommends continued work on the improvement of the treaty monitoring system, taking into account multiple proposals made in this respect, in particular those made by the monitoring bodies themselves and by the meetings of the chairpersons of the treaty bodies. The comprehensive national approach taken by the Committee on the Rights of the Child should also be encouraged.

5. The World Conference recommends that States Parties to human rights treaties accept all the available optional petition procedures, including the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 22 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and article 14 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The World Conference also recommends that the Commission on Human Rights start examining the possibility of establishing an International Human Rights Court.

6. The World Conference underlines the importance of preserving and strengthening the system of country and thematic rapporteurs and working groups reporting to the Commission on Human Rights, including separate and joint visits for fact-finding and on-site monitoring and the necessary human and financial resources for carrying them out. The World Conference, mindful of the need to prevent outbreaks of serious violations of human rights and to bring an end to such situations, calls upon the concerned United Nations bodies and Member States to develop the Organization's capacities for early warning, preventive action and for active methods to arrest such situations, including the ability of human

rights expert bodies to bring these situations to the attention of the Security Council when they threaten international peace and security.

7. The World Conference recommends that the chairpersons and rapporteurs of all thematic and country-oriented mechanisms in the field of human rights, both those based on treaties and resolutions, be convened annually in order to coordinate their work and to guarantee consistency. United Nations institutions, organs and agencies system-wide which offer technical assistance and advisory services should participate in these meetings.

8. The World Conference recommends that the United Nations assume a more active role in the promotion and protection of human rights in situations of international or non-international armed conflicts, irrespective of whether humanitarian law applies. In this regard coordination of humanitarian activities and cooperation between the organizations concerned should be further strengthened.

9. The World Conference, recognizing the role and responsibility of human rights organs concerning the fate of internally and externally displaced persons, recommends the establishment of an effective mechanism to monitor the human rights of these persons.

10. The World Conference recommends that mechanisms be further developed for effectively ensuring follow-up to decisions and recommendations made by the monitoring organs in the field of human rights and humanitarian law.

11. The World Conference further encourages the crucial role of non-governmental organizations active in human rights and/or development to contribute to and participate in the work of both treaty-based and resolution-based bodies and procedures.

12. The World Conference recommends that persons alleged to be responsible for grave violations of human rights and humanitarian law, including genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and apartheid, be subject to prosecution and trial, either before a national court or an international judicial institution, regardless of where the offence was committed.

VI. Follow-up to the World Conference

1. The World Conference recommends to the General Assembly that a high level expert meeting be convened in 1998 with the mandate of assessing the progress made in realizing the principles set forth in the Final Document as well as the Programme for Human Rights Action. States, the Secretary-General and the heads of other organs and agencies in the United Nations system, as well as regional human rights institutions, are requested to submit to the expert meeting reports containing a detailed account of action taken and results achieved in the implementation of the present Programme of Action.